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## OCCASIONAL PAPERS

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### A Plan for Regional Administration of School Library Service In Indiana

by Wilma Bennett

This study formulates a plan for the improvement of school library service in Indiana by means of group administration of school libraries(1). The proposed plan is limited to school library service provided by schools within the existing framework of school government and administration. Library service to schools through the public library is not considered. The following summary outlines briefly the essential facts concerning the present pattern of public schools and school libraries in Indiana. School districts are co-extensive with the city, the incorporated town, or the township; therefore, the greater number of districts are small in population, area, and taxpaying ability. The trend toward the consolidation of one-room elementary schools is well marked, but the consolidation of small and inefficient high schools has only begun. This plan for co-operation in group administration of school libraries is designed particularly to improve library service in the present small schools and to facilitate the combination of library resources upon future consolidation of high schools as well as elementary schools.

Public education is a function of the state, and the Indiana State Board of Education has committed itself to the policy that provision of school library service is a duty of school corporations. The quality of school library service is one of the criteria used by the Inspection Division of the Department of Public Instruction to grade or "commission" high schools. Specified standards for library service must be met by high schools which receive either a continuous or first-class commission. One of these standards is the employment of state-licensed teacher-librarians or full-time school librarians. The concern of the state in school library service is thus already well established.

School libraries at present are small autonomous units; their income for library materials is not large, and the partially-trained persons in charge of them have varied duties. Turnover in personnel in small schools is extensive and teacher-librarians are lacking in experience. This report suggests one possible plan of organizing school library service so as (a) to improve individual school libraries, (b) to supplement the services which school librarians can offer independently within each school, and (c) to maintain continuity of the school library program between changes of school librarians and of principals. It is predicated on existing policies and conditions and attempts to provide a richer and more comprehensive service which will extend but not conflict with the pattern of school library service which has already been established.

Under the proposed plan, regional (i.e., multi-county) administration of library service throughout the state will be directed by 9 regional school librarians, each supervising library service in the schools of one region. Each region will be set up with a headquarters in an urban trade center having extensive library facilities in a college or large public school system. Since an important service of regional administration of school library service is access to an extensive collection of materials, the regions are so bounded as to enable the school personnel to visit headquarters frequently, and personnel from the outermost sections in each may reach headquarters by automobile in less than 2 hours. Obvious practical and administrative considerations make it unwise to divide a county between regions although such division might easily be defended in the light of geography, trading center influence, transportation, and other similar factors(2). Hence, before putting the plan into operation, county and city superintendents in those counties drawn equally to more than one center should be consulted to learn which region can offer them the best service.

In this study, the recommended divisions into regions are: Region I with Lake, Porter, La Porte, Elkhart, Starke, Marshall, Pulaski, Fulton, Cass, St. Joseph, and Miami counties, and with headquarters associated with the South Bend public schools; Region II with La Grande, Steuben, Kosciusko, Noble, De Kalb, Whitley, Allen, Wabash, Huntington, Wells, and Adams counties, and with headquarters associated with the Ft. Wayne public schools; Region III with Newton, Jasper, Benton, White, Carroll, Warren, Tippecanoe, Clinton, Fountain, and Montgomery counties, and with headquarters at Purdue University; Region IV with Howard, Tipton, Boone, Hamilton, Hendricks, Marion, Hancock, Johnson, Shelby, and Decatur counties, and with headquarters at the Indiana State Library in Indianapolis; Region V with Grant, Blackford, Jay, Madison, Delaware, Randolph, Henry, Wayne, Rush, Fayette, Union, and Franklin counties, and with headquarters at Ball State College, Muncie; Region VI with Vermillion, Parke, Putnam, Vigo, Clay, Sullivan, and Greene counties, and with headquarters at Indiana State College, Terre Haute; Region VII with Morgan, Owen, Monroe, Brown, Bartholomew, Lawrence, Jackson, and Orange counties, and with headquarters at Indiana University, Bloomington; Region VIII with Knox, Daviess, Martin, Gibson, Pike, Du Bois, Crawford, Posey, Vandenberg, Warrick, Spencer, and Perry counties, and with headquarters at Evansville College, Evansville; and Region IX with Jennings, Ripley, Dearborn, Washington, Scott, Jefferson, Switzerland, Ohio, Harrison, Floyd, and Clark counties, and with headquarters at Hanover College, Hanover.

For greater service to individual schools, the number of schools to be supervised by each regional librarian is kept as small as is compatible with economy in administrative expense. The work load of supervision is equalized as much as possible between regions (Table 1).

Under this proposed plan for regional administration of school library service, high school libraries will remain integral parts of the schools they serve, and their school librarians or teacher-librarians will continue as members of the teaching staff. Service from each high school library will be extended to elementary grades housed in the same building and to separate elementary schools whose graduates attend that high school. In cases where a school library serves one or more elementary schools in townships which maintain no high schools, the trustee will arrange to pay for such service in a manner similar to that by which he now pays transfer tuition for pupils of his township to attend high school(3). Each school will pay for and retain ownership of its own library materials.

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TABLE 1. REGIONS FOR REGIONAL ADMINISTRATION OF SCHOOL LIBRARY SERVICE IN INDIANA

Region No.	No. of Counties	Total Population (1940)	No. of Schools with Grades 9-12	No. of Other Schools	Total No. of Schools	No. of Pupils in Township Schools
1	11	749,808	131	286	417	42,308
2	11	374,155	108	227	335	36,156
3	10	202,752	90	103	193	25,018
4	10	674,129	100	213	313	39,883
5	12	440,705	103	252	355	35,250
6	7	241,402	70	189	259	27,438
7	8	181,858	47	250	297	22,781
8	11	364,322	86	376	462	34,557
9	12	196,665	57	262	319	23,667

Sources of data: Indiana School Directory, 1940/41, p. 332; US Bureau of the Census, Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940. First Series. Number of Inhabitants. Indiana, pp. 4-5.

The statewide organization of this plan for regional administration of school library service will be similar to the type of administration used in Indiana for the Federal program for instruction in home economics(4). The State Supervisor of Home Economics is a member of the Division of Vocational Education of the Indiana State Department of Public Instruction. Four itinerant teacher-trainers (or supervisors) of home economics work under her, have their headquarters at the four state teacher-training institutions, and are paid with funds contributed jointly by the state institutions and by the state and Federal governments. The college or university selects and pays the itinerant teacher-trainer on the same basis as it does the other members of its faculty, and provides office space and clerical assistance. The itinerant teacher may teach summer classes, assist in the teacher-training program, and bring information from the field by which to evaluate and to improve the teacher-training program in home economics. Each itinerant teacher-trainer supervises about 150 teachers of home economics in her district. Home economics teaching is supervised in all schools which receive Federal money for a portion of the salary of the teacher of home economics, and assistance is given on request to schools which do not participate in the Federal program. Local schools are responsible for home economics instruction along with the rest of the curriculum, and the program of supervision is one of advice to the administrators in the line of authority and of direct assistance to the teachers of home economics.

The points of likeness between the supervision of vocational home economics and the regional administration of school library service are (a) service to a number of counties by one supervisor, (b) headquarters in the state colleges and universities, (c) reciprocal relations between regional supervision and the teacher-training program of the colleges and universities, (d) the nature of the supervisory program, in placing responsibility for providing educational facilities on the local school and offering advisory service only, and (e) direct authority exercised by the State Department of Public Instruction through the line of school administrators. In the regional administration of school library service no Federal aid or state aid ear-marked for individual school libraries, either for materials or for salaries of school librarians, will be necessary. Since libraries are concerned first of all with the provision of materials, a larger portion of the time of the regional school librarian will be devoted to assistance in acquiring and making materials available through the individual librarian than to visits

exclusively to observe and improve the school librarians themselves. The program of regional administration of school library service depends more on visits of the school personnel to the regional headquarters to see materials than on visits of the supervisor to the schools.

### Proposed Program

The functions carried out by the regional school librarian and his clerical staff include assistance to school librarians and administrators in the library program within each school and centralized performance of those technical library processes which may be accomplished more economically or more efficiently for the group of school libraries in the region as a whole, rather than by the various individual schools. The following services are proposed:

(a) Maintenance of a display collection of books, pamphlets, periodicals, pictures, charts, maps, and other teaching materials for assistance and in-service training in book selection of the teachers and the school librarians responsible for this function in each school. Display collections in each of the regional headquarters will be maintained largely through sample copies from publishers. The assurance that their publications will be available constantly for examination and possible purchase will enable publishers to discontinue their present system of routine sampling to individual teachers. The president of one publishing company says of the plan for a display collection derived from publishers' samples: "We are very much in favor of such a plan if it means that we will receive orders from and ship to a few shipping points, such as the 9 regional offices. From the publishers' point of view, present conditions make it necessary to have as much consolidation of shipping as possible. It would also be a decided advantage to us from the point of view of sampling books. It is impossible for us to sample every school, but we could sample 9 regional offices with our most important books"(5).

The display collection will grow gradually from its establishment and might take 5 to 10 years to reach its maximum size and would probably never exceed 15,000 titles. Although occasional publications of several hundred different publishers would be of interest in the regional display collection, most books of value for school use could probably be supplied by not more than 200 publishers, and the larger part of the collection would probably come from about 17 major publishing firms(6).

An extensive collection of sample copies of magazines will also be maintained in each regional headquarters to make possible the examination of specific titles or related groups of periodicals by individual teachers, librarians, and students of education. A selection from these samples will form a semi-annual display to assist those compiling the periodical orders in the schools. The only expense involved for the sample periodical collection will be for storage and postage for requests for new samples as needed. Pamphlets for the display collection will be obtained as sample copies from publishers whenever practicable. Because of the variations among the sources of pamphlets, the methods of acquiring them will be adapted as necessary to acquire examination copies from educational and social service organizations, and from national, state, and local governments, as well as from commercial publishers. A collection of mounted pictures, posters, and charts may be built up gradually with very little expense and the regional headquarters will cooperate with existing agencies providing the more expensive audio-visual teaching materials in the form of moving pictures.

(b) Exchange of duplicate and gift periodicals to build up a file for use within each school library. Periodicals in the school library afford recreational reading and information to meet extra- and non-curricular interests and also to provide material important for curriculum use. Current numbers are usually used to satisfy non-curricular interests, while files for the past 5 to 8 years provide reference material of great value. The newly established or small library must emphasize the provision of magazines for current use and is likely to be weak in periodical files needed for class work in social studies, science, public speaking, English, and other subjects. To supply this need and to furnish duplicates to be clipped for the picture and information files, gift copies and unwanted duplicate periodicals obtained from local public libraries, individuals in the communities, and college libraries, will be distributed among the schools of each region and among regions.

(c) Provision of supplementary reference information service including inter-library loans, and group production of bibliographies and special indexes to enlarge the resources of individual school libraries and to train and stimulate pupils and teachers in the use of library materials. Requests for reference and information service will be filled by the regional librarian through his use of the library in the college or university in which the regional headquarters is located or through any other large library to which he has access. If a book must be loaned to supply the information requested, the regional school librarian will consult the union catalog of the holdings of the school libraries of the region to locate a copy for inter-school loan within the region. If no school has the title needed, the college library, the State Library, or a school library in another region may lend the book. In order to make available as many different titles as possible within the limitations of funds for school library materials, the school librarians of the region will select their titles for purchase with regard for the titles held in other school libraries of the region. Especially in the selection of fiction and books for non-curricular interests, the school librarians should be able to agree on variety in their selections and on a schedule for routing the books among the group of school libraries for circulation to pupils. Compiling bibliographies, arranging for the pooling and sharing of reference materials, and organizing cooperative reference projects (such as indexing information on occupations, compiling sources of material for remedial reading, or making subject and interest guides to fiction) are reference services which are legitimate functions of the regional librarian.

(d) Supplying advice and technical assistance as needed and requested, concerning the library program in the group of schools in the region as a whole or in individual schools. To carry out the program of supervision of school library service within the region, the regional school librarian will confer with county superintendents, principals, trustees, boards of education, librarians, and teachers, both in the headquarters office or on visits to schools. He will hold group meetings of the school librarians at the regional headquarters and will arrange group meetings or individual conferences with librarians, teachers, or administrators at the county teachers' institutes. As a device for stimulating interest in school library service and for gaining help in solving local school library problems, arrangements will be made for librarians, teachers, or administrators to visit libraries outside their own schools. The regional school librarian will assist in the technical processes involved in organizing the school libraries, and, with the assistance of a clerical staff, will do centralized classification and cataloging for all the school libraries of a region.

A bulletin or news letter for each region will contain announcements of new

materials, information about the sample collection, news of professional and cultural activities of personnel of the schools of the region, and contributions from librarians, teachers, administrators, and pupils. The regional librarians will exchange with each other copies of all their publications, such as publicity material and bibliographies, and will make similar exchanges with state and city school library supervisors. By this means, pertinent information will be collected and disseminated to the school librarians of the state for assistance with their work.

Inter-library loans of bulletin board displays and exhibits, and the sharing of ideas for advertising books will be arranged by the regional school librarians. They will also provide a medium for inter-school pupil recommendations of reading to other pupils. By contacts with the personnel of the schools over a period of years the regional school librarians will learn to know the school programs and will be able to continue the planned library services between changes of school librarians or administrators, and to shorten and facilitate the period of adjustment for new school librarians.

(e) Facilities for the pooled buying of library materials (such as books, periodicals, government publications, pamphlets, filmstrips, and supplies) and of services (such as binding, and rental of educational moving pictures) in order to give individual schools the higher discounts obtained on a large volume of business and to eliminate the technical details of ordering from the work load of individual school librarians. The amount of money available in Indiana for pooled buying for school libraries on a regional basis would be sufficiently large to command maximum discounts. For the enrollment of the school year 1940/41, if the amount for school library materials were the then recommended \$0.50 per pupil in the elementary grades and \$0.75 per pupil in the high school, \$229,717 would have been spent for grades 1 through 8 and \$147,596 for grades 9 through 12. Although discounts on subscriptions to periodicals are not standardized to the same extent as those for books, they increase in proportion to the total size of an order. The pooled order, containing hundreds of duplicate titles among the schools, would command extensive discounts either on the basis of 9 regions or of one pooled order for the state. Purchase of pamphlets likewise is not standardized. Many are purchased through the same channels as books, others through special jobbing services handling only pamphlets, and some are treated as periodicals. Quantity purchasing of pamphlets in many cases has the same advantages as pooled book purchases. For example, a discount of 25% is given to "Quantity purchasers of 100 or more publications" of the same or assorted titles ordered from the US Superintendent of Documents(7). Although the savings in money resulting from group purchasing are noteworthy the service features of the plan probably are more important. The assistance of the regional school librarian in selecting and locating the particular materials needed by any school is a service which will increase the usefulness of the individual library even more than the increased buying power due to larger discounts.

When large quantities of binding are sent to a single library binder a discount from list price is usually received. That small school libraries need direction in handling their rebinding is illustrated by the comment that "Our experience with township and small town library rebinding is that books received from these libraries are without exception in very bad condition when received for rebinding, which requires much time in the preparations for binding..."(8). The problem is one of inadequate funds and unawareness of the importance of keeping books in good condition. In-service training in this field by the regional school librarians would be even more important than the savings effected by binding pools.



(f) Centralized provision of catalog cards, which would supply an accurate and up-to-date card catalog for each school library, effect economy of time and money for each library, and produce in time a union catalog of all school library holdings in the region. Cataloging is one of the most technical of the librarian's duties and requires training, skill and uninterrupted time for its performance. In the individual school library, new books are typically not cataloged until they are received, and are thus kept out of circulation at a time when pupils and teachers are most interested in having them. Cataloging deferred or inaccurately done makes an unreliable card catalog which interferes with the efficient utilization of library resources by patrons and librarians. Centralized cataloging will give twofold economy: the cost per set of catalog cards will be lowered when the professional work of cataloging can be done at one time for all the libraries holding a given title, and the school librarian's time thus saved will be available for work with pupils and teachers. Cecil and Heaps estimate that nearly three-fourths of the time required for cataloging in a school library might be saved by duplicating catalog cards in a central office(9). The total time required for centralized cataloging presumably will decrease as the regional union catalog and the display collection grow. In time, cards for nearly all the books purchased, except those just published, will be available immediately for duplication. Sets of cards can be duplicated by an inexpensive hand-operated device which will print 750 to 1000 cards per hour(10). After professionally prepared cards are available for a title, additional sets can be duplicated by clerical assistants as needed. Books selected for the display collection will be cataloged as received so that duplicate sets of cards can be made while book orders are being filled. With such a plan in operation, catalog cards would reach the school libraries with the new books.

Classification will also be done centrally and will be uniform for all of the school libraries in a region. Library holdings may then be combined without conflict when schools are later consolidated. Each school librarian will make his own cross references from his own official list of subject headings inasmuch as the service from the regional headquarters will be limited to supplying the sets of catalog and shelf list cards with subject headings and classification numbers added. The union catalog listing the region's display collection and the holdings of all the school libraries will serve as an example and as an in-service training device to assist the school and teacher-librarians to maintain functional catalogs for their individual libraries. Mechanical preparation of books, i.e., preparation of book card and pocket, marking ownership, and lacquering the cover, will be done in the individual schools by pupils under the direction of the school librarian. If all books purchased are routed through the regional headquarters rather than directly to individual schools, the class number could be stamped on the cover by a relatively inexpensive signet embosser such as is used in commercial binderies. This method will insure neatness and uniformity in appearance and will save time in the individual school libraries.

(g) Contributions to the teacher-training program of the colleges and universities in which the regional headquarters are located. The sample collection of library materials and textbooks will be a laboratory in which prospective teachers and librarians will learn of materials available for use in their teaching. It will assist them in becoming familiar with the books and materials for the boys and girls they are to teach. Teachers in the practice school, members of the college education department, and any one else connected with the college or university, should have free access to the collection. Teacher-librarians in training and practice teachers may be assigned to the regional headquarters for part of their "practice work." The regional librarian can assist those directing the training

of teacher-librarians and teachers by reporting on the needs of beginning teachers and school librarians as he observes them in the field, and by talks or demonstrations before classes in education, and by conference as requested with professors of education and individual students. The data gathered by the regional school librarians will form a valuable resource for research in the field of education, and the regional school librarian may act as intermediary for the education department in arrangements for research or experimentation in schools of the region. Under the proposed plan for regional administration of school library service, the college or university will furnish quarters (including light, heat, and janitor service) for the regional school library headquarters. The regional school librarian will use the college library's facilities for his own research and in locating answers to questions from the schools of the region. The college or university library may also make a limited number of inter-library loans to school libraries in the region.

### Conclusion

This plan is not offered as a panacea for all the problems of school library administration. Its chief application is to those school districts which are too small to employ their own school library supervisors. Owing to the large number of such school districts one school library supervisor in charge of the whole state can give but superficial attention to each school. However, certain of the services of the proposed plan for regional administration of school library service, such as centralized cataloging and access to the display collection, are equally valuable in large schools. The plan is thought to have the following four advantages:

(a) No change is necessary in governmental or school units. Legislation is needed to begin a state-administered program of regional administration of school library service. Specific permissive legislation would also aid a program of voluntary cooperation, but the plan may be installed without any change in laws. In no case would the plan cause changes in school government. Larger school districts are badly needed in Indiana in order to support more adequate schools, but legislation to correct the government of the schools will be initiated for the sake of the schools as a whole and not alone to improve library service. A demonstration of school library service on a regional basis may stimulate the adoption of larger units for other school services.

(b) Local initiative and control are retained. By sharing the responsibility for school library service (as well as the other functions of school administration), the school trustees, boards of education, and administrators will be impelled to consider and test its value. The local school librarian is still the key person in supplying educational materials within the local school. By increasing his ability and efficiency and by getting the largest quantity of the best materials for the money available, library service may be vitally improved.

(c) Service may begin on a voluntary, locally financed basis and may be tried out as a demonstration prior to passage of legislation for a statewide program. By beginning piecemeal with a group of school corporations sufficiently interested to contribute to its cost, the plan may be perfected in use before committing the state to its administration.

(d) Costs are moderate and funds are kept in local schools where they are most needed to build up book stock. The money saved by group buying and better management of materials under regional administration of school library service would probably amount to more than the cost of administering the plan. The primary objective of the plan, however, is improved library service rather than economy.

Although this report has been concerned with the advantages of the proposed plan for regional administration of school library service in Indiana, the plan should have merit in other states. Any such plan must be adapted to suit the factors of government of schools, funds available for library service, training of school personnel, and features of geography and population of any state adopting it. The technique of group supervision of school libraries may be applied to any group of school districts which cannot maintain their own full-time school library supervisors. Centralized cataloging and classification may be done for newly established libraries, or centralized cataloging may be undertaken for large school libraries with established variations in classification. Group purchasing is of more interest to small schools than to large systems with buying power already sufficient to command maximum discounts. Access to a comprehensive display collection for book selection, however, is as interesting to the personnel of a large system as to that of small schools, and can be provided only as a group project for a large number of schools.

This proposed plan for the regional administration of school library service is suggested in part or in its entirety for schools which by group cooperation seek to improve the quality of their library service immediately, without change in school administration.

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#### FOOTNOTES

(1) This paper is a condensation of a report by the same title submitted to the University of Chicago Graduate Library School for the M A degree in June 1943, and which may be borrowed from the University of Chicago on inter-library loan.

(2) The following sources were helpful in identifying the trade centers and the territory tributary to each: International Magazine Company, Inc., The Trading Area System of Sales Control (NY: International Magazine Co., 1929) 149 p.; Paul W. Stewart, Market Data Handbook of the United States (Wash.: GPO, 1929) 534 p.; J. Walter Thompson Company, comps., Population and Its Distribution (J. Walter Thompson Company, 1926) 218 p.

(3) Burns' Annotated Indiana Statutes, 1948, Vol. VI, sec. 28-2410.

(4) Information on this subject was obtained in an interview with Miss Hortense Hurst, State Supervisor, Home Economics Education, Indiana Department of Public Instruction, on November 17, 1942.

(5) Letter dated Dec. 9, 1942, from Donald C. Brace, President of Harcourt, Brace & Co.

(6) These figures are based on a study of the standard book selection aids (Standard Catalog for High School Libraries, Children's Catalog, and Subject Index to Books for Intermediate Grades) and the figures on annual book production in Publishers' Weekly 138 (1940) 824, 139 (1941) 231, 141 (1942) 179.

(7) Verso of cover page of each Price List of publications for sale by the Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D.C.

(8) Letter dated Dec. 19, 1942, from Oscar Schnable, National Library Bindery Company of Indiana, Inc.

(9) Henry L. Cecil and Willard A. Heaps, School Library Service in the United States: An Interpretative Survey (NY: Wilson, 1940) p. 282.

(10) For example, the Cardmaster, sold by the Cardmaster Company, 311 W. Hubbard St., Chicago; or the Print-O-Matic Automatic Card-size Duplicator, available from Business Economics, Inc., 1035 Security Trust Bldg., Indianapolis 4, Indiana.

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